

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 97

Expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the arrests of Cuban democracy activists by the Cuban Government.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 25, 2003

Mr. NELSON of Florida (for himself, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. EDWARDS, and Mr. MCCAIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

APRIL 7, 2003

Committee discharged; considered, amended, and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the arrests of Cuban democracy activists by the Cuban Government.

Whereas on March 18, 2003, Fidel Castro and the Government of Cuba began an islandwide campaign to arrest and jail dozens of prominent democracy activists and critics of the repressive regime;

Whereas since March 18, 2003, the Cuban police have arrested approximately 80 Cubans for engaging in free speech under Law 88, the Law for the Protection of National Independence and the Economy of Cuba, which is a notorious law passed 3 years ago by the communist county;

Whereas the imprisoned political opponents of Castro include librarians, journalists, and others who have supported the Varela Project, which seeks to bring free speech, open elections, and democracy to the island nation;

Whereas during this crackdown, widely recognized as the most severe in some time, Fidel Castro is inhumanely pursuing the harshest punishments for these political prisoners, including pursuing life sentences for as many as 12; and

Whereas the failure to condemn the Cuban Government's renewed political repression of democracy activists will undermine the opportunity for freedom on the Island: Now therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) condemns the recent arrests and other in-
3 timidation tactics against democracy activists by the
4 Castro regime;

5 (2) calls on the Cuban Government to imme-
6 diately release those imprisoned and held during this
7 most recent crackdown for activities the government
8 wrongly deems “subversive, counter-revolutionary,
9 and provocative”;

10 (3) reaffirms Senate Resolution 272, 107th
11 Congress, agreed to June 10, 2002, which was
12 agreed to without opposition and which called for,
13 among other things, amnesty for all political pris-
14 oners;

1 (4) praises the bravery of those Cubans who,
2 because they practiced free speech and signed the
3 Varela Project petition, have been targeted in this
4 most recent government crackdown; and

5 (5) urges the President to demand the imme-
6 diate release of these prisoners and to take all ap-
7 propriate steps to secure their immediate release.

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